

Message Text

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TAGS: XV, TGEN, PLOS

SUBJ: ANTARCTIC MEETING: MINERAL RESOURCES

FROM USDEL ANTARCTICA

1. DISCUSSIONS OF AGENDA ITEM ON MINERAL RESOURCES
FRIDAY 13 JUNE MOVED QUICKLY FROM GENERAL DEBATE REPORTED
SEPTEL TO DISCUSSION OF PROPOSALS FOR EXPERT STUDIES
BEFORE NINTH MEETING ON ENVIRONMENTAL, ECONOMIC, GEO-
LOGICAL AND LEGAL/POLITICAL ISSUES. US DEL HAS SUPPORTED
ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES BY GOVERNMENTS BUT IS HOLDING
BACK SUPPORT ON OTHER STUDIES PENDING CLARIFICATION OF
INTENTIONS WHILE PARTICIPATING IN SAMLL GROUP DRAFTING
TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR LEGAL/POLITICAL.

2. AUSTRALIAN DEL PROPOSED TWO PARALLEL WORKING GROUPS--
ONE FOR STUDY OF ECOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF MINTERAL EXPLORAT-
TION; ANOTHER FOR POLITICAL AND JURIDICIAL EFFECTS.
UK, BELGIUM AND FRANCE SUPPORTED PROPOSAL WHILE JAPAN
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SAID WE SHOULD NOT DISCUSS MINERAL RESOURCES IN ABSENCE

OF CONSENSUS UNTIL AFTER LOS CONFERENCE. USSR PREFERS INFORMAL POLITICAL DISCUSSION IN CONTEXT PREPCOMS FOR MINTH MEETING. CHILE WILL NOW DISCUSS POLITICAL AS WELL AS ECOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF EXPLORATION, ECONOMIC ISSUES TOO AND REAFFIRMED NEED FOR COMMON ACTION BY THE TWELVE, CITING NEW URGENCY SINCE SEVENTH MEETING. NORWAY, USSR, CHILE AND ARGENTINA WANT SCAR TO DO ECOLOGICAL STUDY WHILE US, NEW ZEALAND, AUSTRALIA OPPOSE SCAR COORDINATION. SOUTH AFRICA WANTS LEGAL ISSUES RESOLVED FIRST TO ESTABLISH LEGAL BASIS FOR RESOURCES REGIME THAT WILL BE EFFECTIVE AS AGAINST THE REST OF THE WORLD. ARGENTINE POSITION ON LEGAL/POLITICAL STUDY RESERVED.

3. AUSTRALIA CHIRS SMALL WORKING GROUP TODRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR LEGAL/POLITICAL MEETING. DEADLOCK RESULTED FRIDAY FROM CHILEAN INSISTENCE THAT TOR NOT REEPT NOT IMPLY MINERAL RESOURCE EXPLOITATION PERMITTED BY ANTARCTIC TREATY AND USDEL INSISTENCE TOR NOT IMPLY ANY EXISTING LEGAL PROHIBITION ON MINERAL RESOURCES ACTIVITIES. FRANCE PUSHED FOR TOR TO STRUCTURE RESOURCE REGIME BUT CONCEDED POINT IN FACE OF CHILEAN RESISTANCE. AUSTRALIA WANTS IMPLICATION MINERAL ACTIVITIES WILL NOT BEGIN UNLESS ENVIRONMENTAL SAFETY DEMONSTRATED.

4. COMMENT: WHILE CHILEAN DEL HAS RPOGRESSED TOWARD GROUP CONCERN FOR URGENCY ON PROCEDURAL ISSUES DURING FIRST WEEK, NO FLEXIBILITY SHOWN ON SUBSTANCE YET. ARGENTINA SAYS VERY LITTLE ON BOTHISSUES. USSR AND JAPAN UNPREPARED FOR MINERAL RESOURCES DISCUSSION AT THIS MEETING. LATIN RELUCTANCE TO MOVE FORWARD ON SUBSTANCE AND USSR/JAPAN RELUCTANCE TO MOVE FORWARD ON PROCEDURE WILL MAKE IT DIFFICULT TO FORM AGREEMENT ON TOR FOR LEGAL/POLITICAL MEETING OF EXPERTS. MOST DELS REMAINS SERIOUSLY CONCERNED ISSUE WILL ARISE IN LOS CONFERENCE, SOME PREFERING LOW PROFILE AND OTHERS PREFERRING DISCRETE SHOW OF UNITY AND RESPONSIBILITY ON PART OF THE TWELVE. END COMMENT.

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